

WI-12
Wicomico County Courthouse
Salisbury
Public

1878, 1936

Prominently sited in the center of Salisbury on the northeast corner of North Division Street and East Main Street is the Wicomico County Courthouse complex, a combination of nineteenth and twentieth century structures erected over the course of over one-hundred years to serve the needs of the county. The building is a fine example of Victorian Gothic public architecture and it is an imposing structure on its site. While the building has been expanded three times during the past sixty years, the original 1870s design has been largely respected.

Following the partition of Somerset and Worcester counties in 1867 in order to create Wicomico County, the new county offices of the clerk of court, register of wills, and county commissioners, etc. were housed in a variety of structures located in Salisbury's central business district. Seven years passed before a lot was acquired for the new courthouse, and another three years lapsed before the new courthouse was erected. The distinctive three-story pressed brick courthouse is distinguished by uneven corner towers and a wide variety Victorian brick and stone decoration. Built at the height of interest in asymmetrical design, the pressed brick courthouse is dominated by a three-story stair and clock tower that rises on the northwest corner. The sides of the courthouse are defined by series of long, narrow window openings accented with keystone and impost blocks. Black painted brick stringcourses as well as soldier courses of brick set on a diagonal serve to divide the wall horizontally. The top of the courthouse wall is

finished with corbelled brickwork that follows an undulating line coincident with the gable forms that front the steeply pitched mansard type roof. A stone plaque fastened to the wall between the two double door entrances records that architect E. M. Butz designed the courthouse and the construction program was executed by W. V. Hughes. Serving on the board of county commissioners at the time were William W. Disharoon, Henry W. Anderson, Adam P. Bethards, Clayton C. Parker, and James H. Elliott. The original late nineteenth century jail, built at the same time, stood behind the courthouse.

The 1878 courthouse and jail remained essentially unchanged until the 1930s when an ambitious addition was financed by the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. Built in 1936 after the designs prepared by the Salisbury firm of Malone and Williams, the addition was conceived in the popular Art Deco style with an ashlar, limestone basement supporting a three-story brick block. The south and east walls retain original features including Art Deco lam posts on each side of the double door entrances. The construction firm of Seymour Ruffand and Sons executed the design with Paul Gywnn Crout as the structural engineer and Thomas S. George as the mechanical engineer. As originally conceived the county jail occupied the top floor, and it is distinguished on the exterior by its plain, unadorned exterior openings. Another addition, the Government Building, was erected in 1974-75, and a third enlargement occurred in the mid 1990s.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Wicomico County Courthouse

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-12

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s):
Architecture
Government
2. Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore
3. Chronological/Development Period(s):
Industrial/Urban Dominance
1870-1930
Modern Period
1930-
4. Resource Type(s):
Courthouse

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Survey No. WI-12

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Wicomico County Courthouse

and/or common

2. Location

street & number North Division Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Salisbury ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Wicomico County Council

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse telephone no.:

city, town Salisbury state and zip code Maryland

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio

city, town Salisbury state Maryland 21801

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

date 1967 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state MD 21032

7. Description

Survey No. WI-12

Condition

____ excellent
☒ good
____ fair

____ deteriorated
____ ruins
____ unexposed

Check one

____ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
____ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Wicomico County Courthouse stands on the northeast corner of the intersection of East Main Street and North Division Street in the center of Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland. The three-story, four-bay brick courthouse, initially designed by E. M. Butz and erected in 1878, it has been enlarged three times; first in 1936 with an addition to the back designed by the Salisbury architectural firm of Malone and Williams, secondly by a large addition in 1974-75, and thirdly in mid 1990s. The 1878 building is covered by a low pitched hip-on-mansard roof. A cross-gabled front is flanked by uneven towers rising on the southwest and northwest corners. The building faces west.

The 1878 courthouse is a Victorian Gothic structure supported by a fully excavated cellar finished on the exterior with rusticated stone. Above the foundation level, the smooth pressed, stretcher bond brick is laid in black mortar. The steeply pitched mansard roof, as well as the tower roofs, is covered with slate.

The west (main) facade is an asymmetrical elevation with uneven towers flanking a cross-gabled entrance wall. Twin double door entrances sheltered by a flat roofed portico defined the first floor. The porch roof is supported on metal columns resting on octagonal bases. The top edge of the roof is trimmed with a decorative metal cresting. The two double door entrances are filled with partially glazed doors and are framed by highly decorative surrounds and are topped by three-pane pointed arch transoms. Stone keystones and impost blocks are combined with black painted bricks laid in stringcourses which accent the red-brown pressed brick. Fixed between the pair of entrances is a stone building plaque inscribed: "County Comm. W. W. Disharoon, H. W. Anderson, A. P. Bethards, C. C. Parker, J. H. Elliott, Architect-E. M. Butz and Contractor W. V. Hughes." The entrance wall is pierced on the second floor by three windows. A large four-over-four sash window is flanked by smaller and narrower four-over-four sash windows. Each opening is topped by a pointed arch highlighted with stone keystones and impost blocks along with black painted bricks. Additional rows of soldier course bricks set on diagonal serve to decorate the building in the manner of a stringcourse. The third floor is pierced by a series of four narrow four-over-four sash windows with decorated arches that are executed in the same fashion as the second floor arches. Fixed in the upper gable is a datestone inscribed, "Erected A. D. 1878." The eave of the center wall is finished with a corbelled brick bed molding fitted under the wooden cornice.

Rising on the northwest corner is a three-story stair and clock tower capped with a short pyramidal roofed spire. The tower also contains the original staircase. The west (front) face of the tower is pierced by a pair of four-over-four sash windows with a rounded pointed arch featuring the same decorative stone and brickwork above each opening. The second floor is defined in a like manner, and the third floor is

(Continued)

8. Significance

Survey No.

WI-12

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1878, 1936, 1974 **Builder/Architect** W. V. Hughes, E. M. Butz

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D **Builder, Architect**

and/or Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Prominently sited in the center of Salisbury on the northeast corner of North Division Street and East Main Street is the Wicomico County Courthouse complex, a combination of nineteenth and twentieth century structures erected over the course of over one-hundred years to serve the needs of the county. The building is of high architectural and historical value and therefore deserves listing in *Category A*. The building is a fine example of Victorian Gothic public architecture and it is an imposing structure on its site. While the building has been expanded three times during the past sixty years, the original 1870s design has been largely respected.

Following the partition in 1867 of Somerset and Worcester counties in order to create Wicomico County, the new county offices of the clerk of court, register of wills, and county commissioners, etc. were housed in a variety of structures located in Salisbury's central business district. Seven years passed before a lot was acquired for the new courthouse, and another three years lapsed before the new courthouse was erected. The distinctive three-story pressed brick courthouse is distinguished by uneven corner towers and a wide variety Victorian brick and stone decoration. Built at the height of interest in asymmetrical design, the pressed brick courthouse is dominated by a three-story stair and clock tower that rises on the northwest corner. The sides of the courthouse are defined by series of long, narrow window openings accented with keystone and impost blocks. Black painted brick stringcourses as well as soldier courses of brick set on a diagonal serve to divide the wall horizontally. The top of the courthouse wall is finished with corbelled brickwork that follows an undulating line coincident with the gable forms that front the steeply pitched mansard type roof. A stone plaque fastened to the wall between the two double door entrances records that architect E. M. Butz designed the courthouse and the construction program was executed by W. V. Hughes. Serving on the board of county commissioners at the time were William W. Disharoon, Henry W. Anderson, Adam P. Bethards, Clayton C. Parker, and James H. Elliott. The original late nineteenth century jail, built at the same time, stood behind the courthouse.

The 1878 courthouse and jail remained essentially unchanged until the 1930s when an ambitious addition was financed by the Federal Emergency Administration of

(Continued)

Survey No. WI-12

PS-2746

7.1 DESCRIPTION

Wicomico County Courthouse, WI-12
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland

pierced by a single window opening filled with a paired set of four-over-four sash windows with pointed arches. The brickwork finishes over the arch repeats the same appearance as the rest of the front arches, although the keystone and impost blocks are of a larger scale. The stair and clock tower is topped by a cross gable highlighted in corbelled brick. A heavy wood cornice finishes the edge of the cross gable. The base of the spire, sheathed with slate, is steeply sloped on four sides with the corners trimmed in wood. The truncated pyramidal roof is topped by a squarish clock tower with paired, louvered vents on each side. The clock tower is capped by cross-gabled roof combined with a tapered spire. The tapered spire is sheathed with slate and is topped by a pointed finial.

Rising on the southwest corner is a three-story tower capped by a truncated pyramidal slate roof. The west (front) face of the tower is pierced in the same fashion as the stair and clock tower with paired four-over-four sash windows on the first and second floors, and a paired set of four-over-four sash windows under a single arch on the third floor. A cross-gable finishes the top of the wall surface, and it is highlighted with corbelled brick and a wooden cornice. The East Main Street elevation of the southwest tower is detailed in the same fashion.

The south side of the courthouse is five bays across with the southeast tower defined by a slightly projecting three-story tower. The rusticated stone foundation is fully exposed on the south side. The first and second floors of the courthouse are pierced by narrow Gothic arched window openings finished with the same decorative stone accents and brickwork features as the front of the courthouse. A center door opening on the first floor has been brick up.

The east (rear) wall of the 1878 courthouse has been completely covered by the 1936 Art Deco style addition, which is a three-story brick structure that rests on a high cut limestone foundation. The seven-bay by three-bay brick and stone addition is covered by a flat roof disguised by a parapet capped with a stone coping. The seven-bay south wall is a symmetrical facade with a slightly projecting five-bay center block that rises slightly above the outer two bays. The center five bays are distinguished by a neoclassical framework of six stone pilasters that rise two stories atop the stone foundation to a plan entablature. The top story of the addition was designed as the county jail, which is defined by a series of paired and grilled openings. Piercing the foundation level is a double-door side entrance framed by plain entrance surround incised with an entablature carving depicting the seal of the State of Maryland. To each side of the seal is a section of Greek key molding. The double glazed door is flanked by a pair of 1930s bronze post lights that stand atop stone bases. The posts have round globe lights and stylized neoclassical columned shafts. The

(Continued)

7.2 DESCRIPTION

Wicomico County Courthouse
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland

foundation wall is pierced to each side by paired window openings filled with metal sash. The outer two bays are marked by single window openings. The first and second floors are pierced by paired six-over-six sash windows set between flanking stone pilasters. The outer single bays are marked by windows framed by stone surrounds.

The east (rear) wall of the 1936 addition is finished in the same fashion as the south wall except that the east wall is a narrower, three-bay elevation. A center, rear entrance is framed by a plain surround within the cut ashlar foundation. Four plain pilasters rise atop the foundation to flank the paired first and second floor window openings. The top floor, the former jail, is marked by three sets of paired openings filled with ventilation louvers.

The north wall of the 1936 addition is partially covered by a two-story hyphen wall of glass that joins the 1990s annex to the courthouse.


The interior retains a number of original late nineteenth century features combined with other elements that date to the 1930s. A terrazzo floor was laid on the main floor, but the late nineteenth century turned baluster staircase survives in the northwest tower off the front vestibule. A long center passage divides the first floor in two sections with tall door openings framed by molded surrounds. The raised panel doors open into various first floor offices. The late nineteenth century paneled doors are topped by glass transoms. The interior of the 1930s courthouse addition has not been altered to any large degree. Fixed on the wall of the cellar hall is large bronze plaque identifying the partners that served in the construction project. The Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works financed the construction along with Wicomico County. The County Commissioners serving at the time were J. S. Adkins, President; C. R. Parker, Vice-President; W. H. Farlow, L. N. Dukes, and E. M. Larmore. The addition was designed by the Salisbury architectural firm of Malone and Williams with Seymour Ruffand and Sons, Inc. as the contractor. Paul Gwynn Crout was the structural engineer and Thomas S. George the mechanical engineer.

8.1 SIGNIFICANCE

Wicomico County Courthouse

Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland

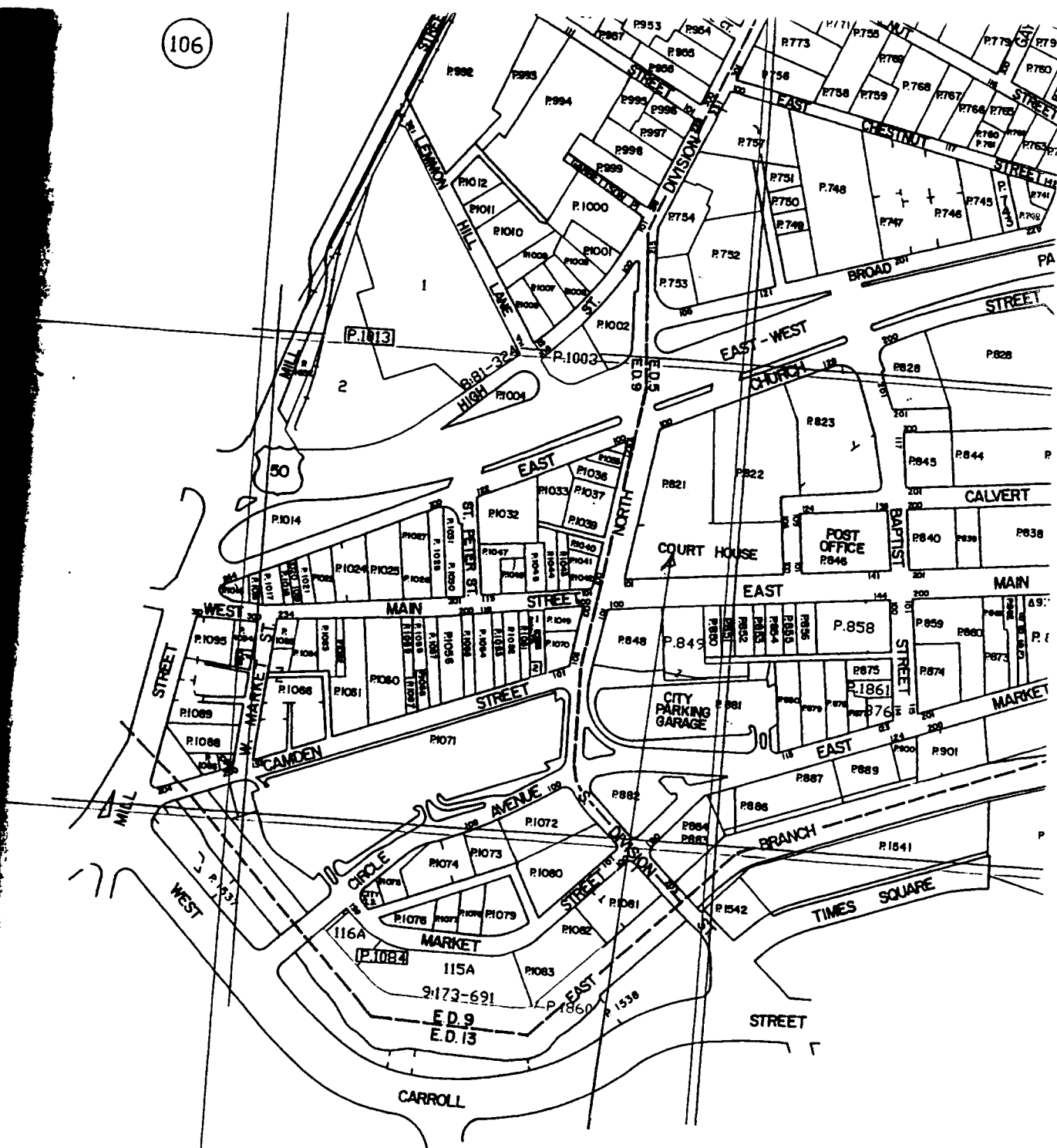
Public Works. Built in 1936 following designs prepared by the Salisbury firm of Malone and Williams, the addition was conceived in the popular Art Deco style with an ashlar limestone basement supporting a three-story brick block. The south and east walls retain original features including the Art Deco lamp posts on either side of the double door ground level entrances. The construction firm of Seymour Ruffand and Sons executed the design with Paul Gywnn Crout as the structural engineer and Thomas S. George as the mechanical engineer. As originally conceived the county jail occupied the top floor, and it is distinguished on the exterior by its plain, unadorned exterior openings. Another addition, the Government Building, was erected in 1974-75, and a third enlargement occurred in the mid 1990s.

1. STATE <u>Maryland</u> COUNTY <u>Wicomico</u> TOWN <u>Salisbury</u> VICINITY STREET NO. <u>N. Division St</u> at <u>Main Street</u> <u>(N.E. corner)</u> ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE <u>Courthouse</u> PRESENT OWNER <u>County Commissioners</u> PRESENT USE <u>Courthouse</u> WALL CONSTRUCTION <u>brick</u> NO. OF STORIES <u>2 1/2</u>		HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY <u>W. 12</u>	
2. NAME <u>Wicomico County Courthouse</u> DATE OR PERIOD <u>1878</u> STYLE <u>Eclectic Victorian Gothic</u> ARCHITECT BUILDER		3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	
4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION <div style="text-align: right;">OPEN TO PUBLIC <u>yes</u></div> <p> <u>Wicomico County Courthouse</u>, built in 1878, is ^{in the style of} an eclectic ^{Gothic} form of late Victorian architecture. Its west facade is composed of two towers with gable area set slightly back from the tower facade. The courthouse is constructed of dark brick with a narrow dark mortar joint on granite basement. Decorative effect is achieved with the use of black brick lines at window sill levels and at ^{cornice} impost levels. The latter also employing mousetooth brickwork panels on each side of the windows. The cornice is composed of brick corbels, both red and black, and white wood cover molding beneath the slate roof. The roof of both towers is identical, a truncated pyramid; the tower on the north has a white square bell cupola with another truncated pyramid roof with weathervane. </p> <p> On each story of the towers are pairs of windows, with limestone sills and lancet arches made of limestone and brick. The central part of the facade has a pair of double doors protected by a one-story supported by three round columns and having an iron fence atop its flat roof. Second story has </p>			
5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered <u>NO</u> Interior <u>good</u> Exterior <u>good</u>			
<p>one long large window flanked by two small windows, like the aforesaid. The third story has four narrow windows whose arches connect. In the gable is a limestone date plaque surrounded by black lines of brick.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[continued on reverse side]</p>			
6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) 		7. PHOTOGRAPH	
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.		9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER <u>Michael Bourne</u> MD. HISTORICAL TRUST BOX 1704 ANNAPOLIS, MD. 21404 DATE OF RECORD <u>Dec, 1969</u>	

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTO PLATES MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

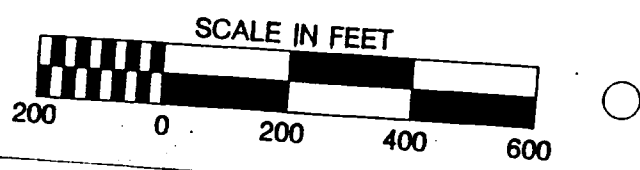
Wicomico County Courthouse

Each of the flanking sides have similar appearance with five-bay center and two flanking pavilions; the ones on the west having a tower, while the ones on the east are without tower. Corbels of the central portion are more defined.



WI-12
 Wicomico County Courthouse
 Wicomico County Tax Map 107
 Parcel 821

MAPS ARE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT. THEY MAY NOT
 BE REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM INCLUDING ELECTRONIC
 SUCH AS DIGITIZING, SCANNING, AND IMAGE PROCESSING.
 ANY SYSTEM NOW KNOWN OR TO BE INVENTED WITHOUT
 WRITING FROM THE PROPERTY MAP DIVISION.



Dealer.
 Dealer in, and Grower of Small

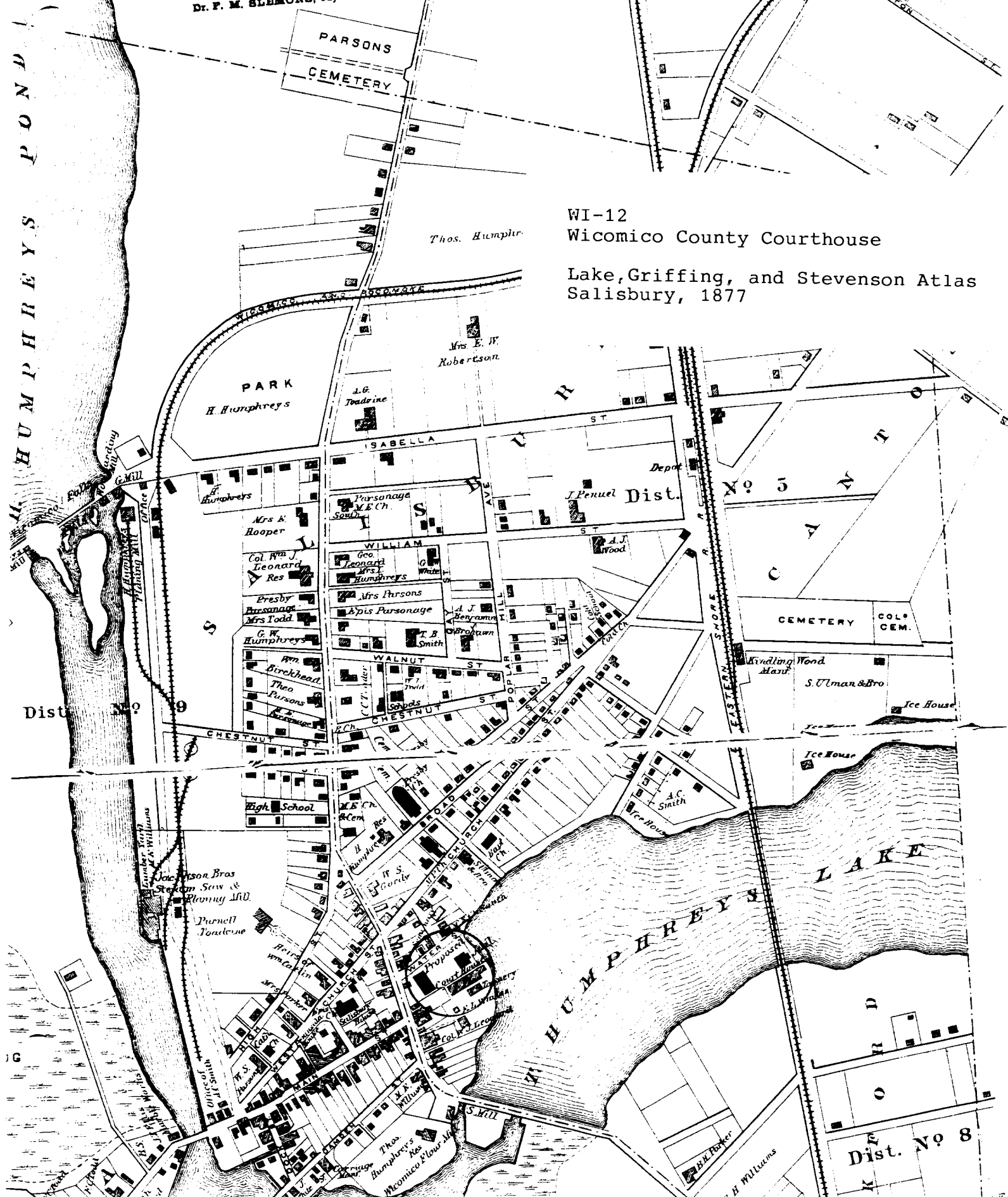
Hotel.
 Proprietor of the "Peninsula Hotel," "Ocean City."

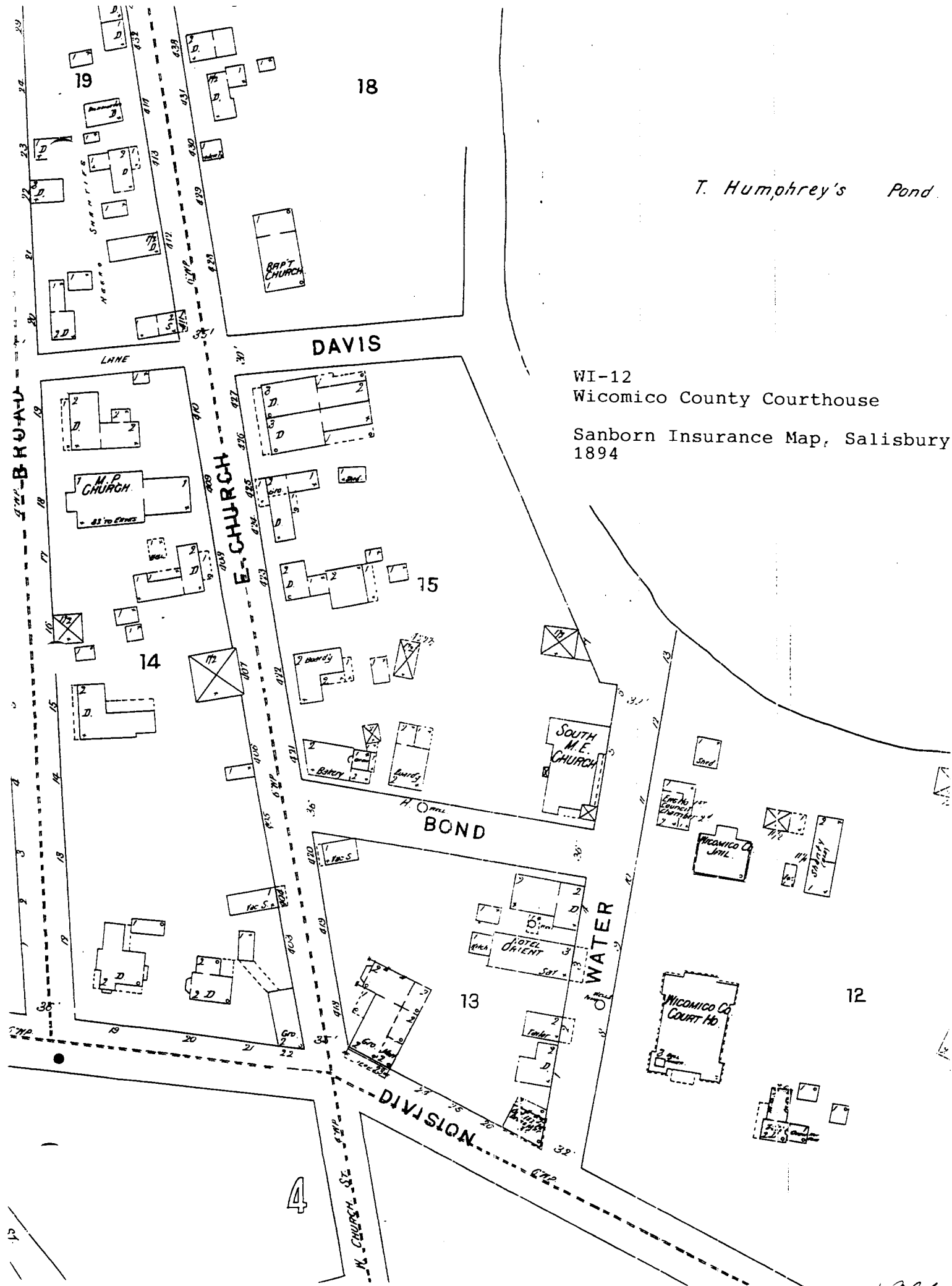
JOHN W. RUARK, Farmer and Proprietor of
 Saw and Grist Mill 5 miles north of Salisbury.
 GEO. H. W. RUARK, Farmer and Proprietor of
 "Ruark Mills" 3 miles north of Salisbury. Res.
 Salisbury.
 M. A. PARSONS, Proprietor of S. S. Mill, 2
 miles west of Salisbury on Wicomico River. Also
 Proprietor of Marine Railway.

Physician.
 Dr. F. M. SLEMONS, Physician and Surgeon.

WI-12
 Wicomico County Courthouse

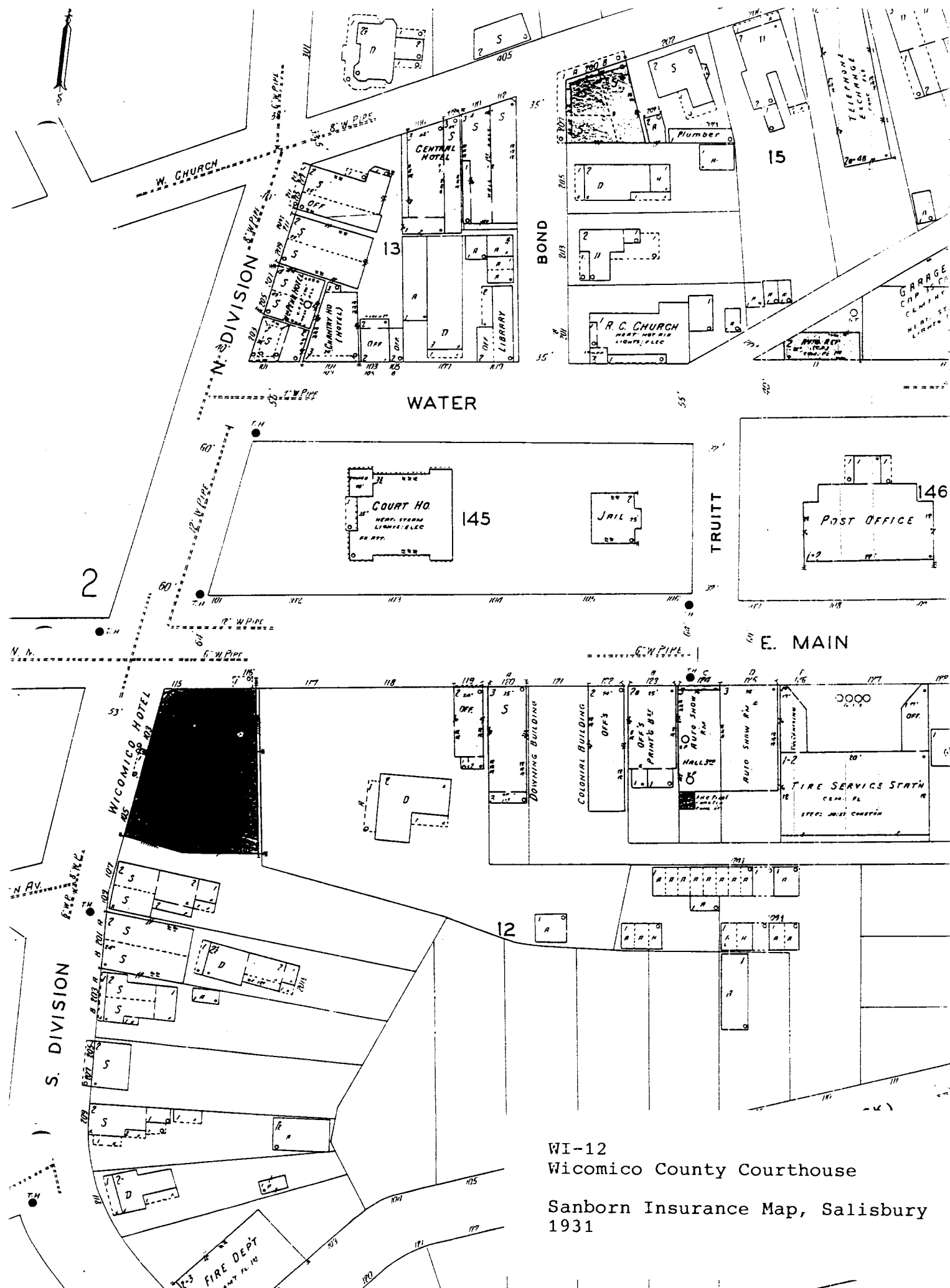
Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas
 Salisbury, 1877





T. Humphrey's Pond

WI-12
Wicomico County Courthouse
Sanborn Insurance Map, Salisbury
1894

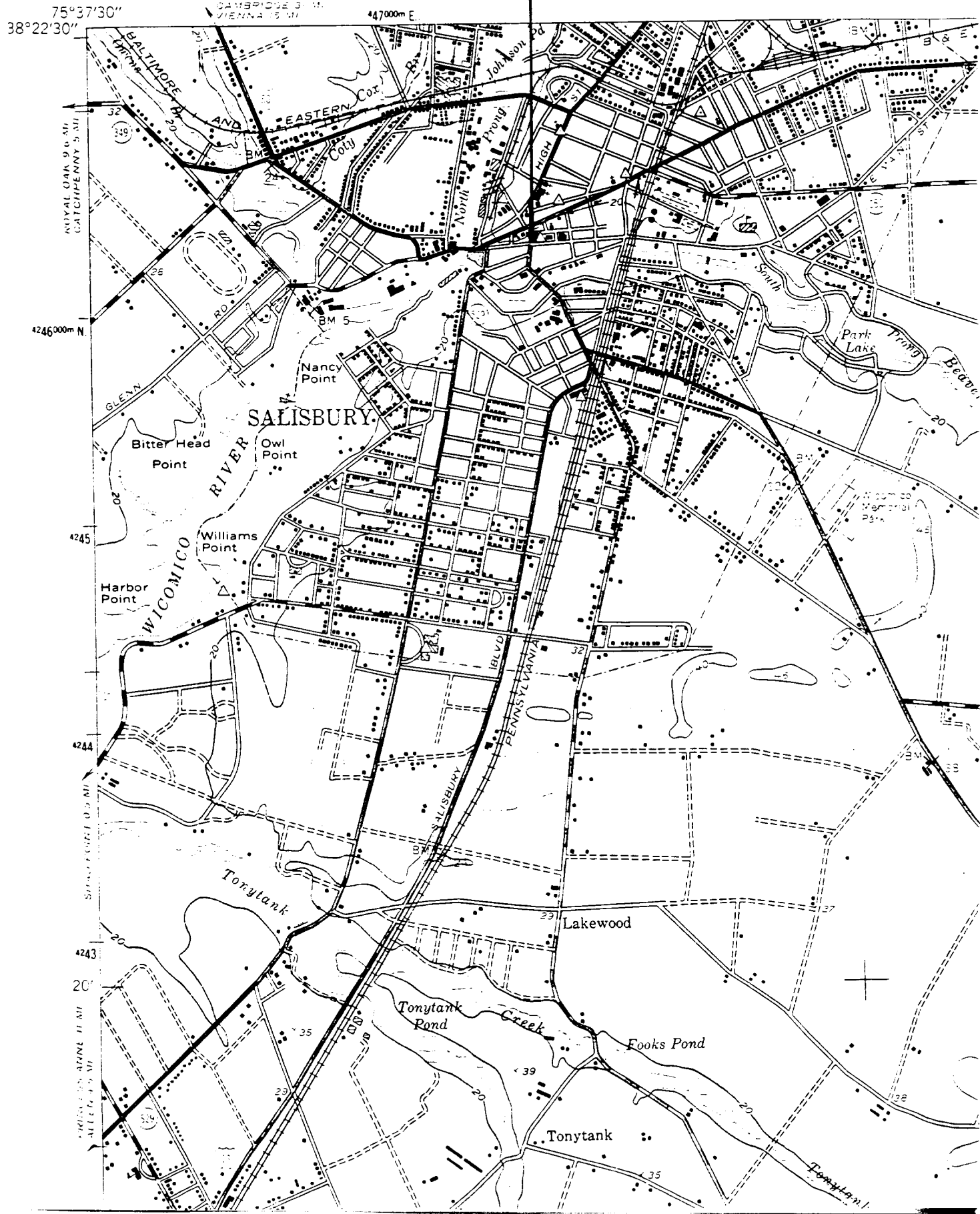


WI-12
Wicomico County Courthouse
Sanborn Insurance Map, Salisbury
1931

WI-12
Wicomico County Courthouse

Salisbury, Maryland Quadrangle
1942

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY





NI 12

Wicomico County Board of Health

Wicomico County, MD.

Severely ill

3/96 From Town of Pottsville

Wic. / 100 1st 1st 1st 1st 1st



01-12

Michigan County Court House

Exhibit, Michigan State Bar

Supreme Court

3/96, Paul Thomas, Pittsburgh

W.G. / W. S. Henderson



W1-12

Wicomico County Courthouse
Frederick, Wicomico County, Maryland
South Entrance of 1930 Addition
3196, Tax Tower, present
W.C. and Elizabeth Taylor



N1-12

Nicomico County Courthouse
Spartanburg, Nicomico Co., Md.
WEST ELEVATION

3196, Paul Touart, Pittsburg, Kansas
VGG. / M.D. Historical Trust



